

Blue Ridge Parkway News Release

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For Immediate Release

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DON'T BE 'BLUE' THIS SPRING WHEN DRIVING THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

Rangers to step up 'Click It or Ticket' Enforcement for Commuters and Sightseers Alike

Rangers and safety officials are warning all motorists on the Blue Ridge Parkway and in the Roanoke corridor to be sure and buckle up or face getting a ticket.

The campaign, part of Virginia's Click It or Ticket campaign, will be actively enforced throughout the Roanoke Corridor and the Blue Ridge Parkway by Virginia state police, Park Rangers and local officers, said Steve Stinnett, Chief Park Ranger of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

"Whether you're a tourist enjoying the Blue Ridge Parkway with your family, or a regular commuter heading to or from work, if you're not wearing a seat belt, you'll be getting a ticket," said Stinnett.

According to statistics compiled by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, almost 200 vehicle occupants died in crashes in America's National Parks from 2004-2008, and nearly one half of them (47 percent) were not wearing their seat belts.

Over the same five-year period, almost 50 vehicle occupants died in Roanoke County alone, and fully 65 percent were not wearing seat belts.

"Seat belts are the most important safety system in any vehicle," said Stinnett, but they won't help save your life unless you buckle up."

Regular seat belt use, night and day, is the single most effective way to protect yourself and your family in the event of a motor vehicle crash.

NHTSA research shows that properly wearing lap and shoulder belts reduce the risk of fatal injury to front seat passengers by 45 percent and the risk of serious injury by 65 percent.

"So this May, remember to make sure everyone in your vehicle is buckled up. It just might save you from getting a ticket, not to mention saving your life," said Stinnett.

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